

HEALTHINESS OF ROMNEY MARSH.

The annual statement of Mr. Hick, medical officer of Health for the New Romney district of the Union, states that during 1897 the births numbered 34, and the annual rate per 1,000 of population was 19.3. The deaths during the year numbered 6, giving the extraordinarily low rate per 1,000 of 3.41, or a little under three and a half deaths in the year for each 1,000 persons living. Mr. Hick thinks he is safe in saying that this is the lowest death rate in the country. One point he again emphasises, and that is the very large proportion the infant deaths bear to the mortality at all ages, no less than one-half of the total number of deaths being of children under one year. The notifications of infectious disease have been four. He has visited each house on receiving note of cases, and advised what measures should be taken. He has during the year dealt with a considerable number of nuisances.

The sewage outfall at Dymchurch, has been a greater nuisance this year than when he first reported it nine years ago. In fact, so bad did it become at one period that the Expenditor for Romney Marsh let in the sea to wash away the accumulated filth. He interviewed the Expenditor with a view to get him to clean out certain ditches in the village of Dymchurch. While disclaiming any responsibility, the Expenditor readily undertook to have the work done, when it was ascertained that the sewage drain of the Eastbridge end of the village was blocked, causing a back flow into the land sewer, instead of the drain being flushed by the overflow from the sewer. The drain was unstopped, and a warning given to certain persons who had been in the habit of throwing offal into the ditch, and since then he had had no complaint of the nuisance.

Mr. Hick says he has devoted a good deal of time to the question of water supply in the district, and to an examination of the water in various places. The supply for outlying houses must of necessity be from very shallow wells, but at a depth varying from 10 feet to 20 feet the water becomes peaty and brackish and very unpleasant to use. In some places it appears to be impossible to find any good water beneath the surface, the only water useable being from ponds. In all cases where he had found this condition, he has advised that the water be boiled and filtered. Although he has examined a fairly large number of samples of water, he has so far found no evidences of sewage contamination.

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W. C.

February, 1898.

Dear Sir,

May I on behalf of the Library Committee, and in accordance with my usual custom, venture to ask if you will have the kindness to forward me a copy of your Report as Medical Officer of Health for the past year.

As it is desired that these Reports may be kept for purposes of reference, I shall feel further much obliged if you will be good enough to favour me by continuing to do so every year.

Thanking you for acceding to my requests in past years.

I am, dear Sir,

Faithfully yours,

The Librarian.

